

# HOW TO ORGANIZE A REHEARSAL

1. Set an obtainable goal for each rehearsal
2. List songs to be rehearsed on the chalkboard. This gives the students time to place their music in order while tuning is taking place
3. Stress musical effects—through technical perfection
4. Do not criticize individual players “We’d better try that again. It won’t hurt anyone but the composer”
5. Give the band a few words that characterize the atmosphere and style of the piece. “This is by JS Bach from the Baroque period, (1600-1750) and you’ll notice lots of imitation between the parts”
6. Read through the entire piece, calling out the rehearsal numbers or letters. Then go back and rehearse problem areas.
7. Let the ensemble get a feel for the overall sound of the piece, while giving vitality to every phrase and understanding the music’s emotional content
8. Announce the piece by title, or better yet, by the composer’s name. “Let’s take the Tchaikovsky piece” This build familiarity with the composers
9. Set the tempo in your mind before raising your hand’s to conduct. Always state the time-beating pattern before beginning a piece of music “In two” “In four” etc
10. The size of the preparation beat determines the loudness of the entrance
11. The conductor’s first note must be so expressive, so charged with the required volitional power—like a light switch being turned on
12. Stop the ensemble for musical reasons only, and only when we can improve the interpretation.
13. Use very few words when the music stops. Select the exact spot and tell them how to improve it. “Second clarinets, double forte on the low G please, while the rest of us are playing piano” Never say “Once more” without giving a good reason for stopping
14. Begin comments without hesitation. “Everybody stops at my signal (when the baton stops) and then silence
15. Students must understand the relative importance of the musical lines. Let them know which instruments are in the foreground, and background. “Low woodwinds, aim for a darker sound”
16. Begin and end each rehearsal with a piece that energizes the band and will get them off to a good start, and will send them home happy

17. Never neglect technical perfection. The music must be performed correctly. Sectional rehearsals are important for improving rhythmic clarity
18. Conduct the score, standing in front of a mirror. Take 10 measures at a time without using the score. Use the right arm only
19. Try to memorize the score before conducting. The score must be in the conductor's head. Use only a few occasional glances at the music while conducting. "Count with me before letter B, 1,2,3,4, fifth measure"
20. A good method of telling the ensemble where to return to:  
IDENTIFY INSTRUMENT/PASSAGE/EXPLAIN WHAT YOU WANT CHANGED "Oboe 1, the legato passage at letter B, please add more air"
21. For the entire band "Begin at B plus four measures"
22. Insist that the players look at you as much as possible, especially while changes in the music are about to occur
23. Do not speak when the ensemble is playing, unless of course, they get lost and you have to call out a letter or number to get them back on track
24. Always thank them for a good rehearsal

Mozart: *The most important part of the music is not contained in the notes*